



FACT SHEET

American Chemical Services
Current activities under
Resource Conservation &
Recovery Act (RCRA)
and Superfund

170739

September 1990

BACKGROUND

American Chemical Services, Inc. (ACS) is located at 420 S. Colfax Ave. in Griffith, IN. A few residences, businesses, railroad tracks, drainage ditches and marshlands are nearby.

ACS began operations in May 1955 as a solvent recovery firm. Later, the company began a chemical manufacturing operation. From 1955 to at least 1975, ACS disposed of a variety of hazardous wastes produced during company operations in an open area on ACS property. Some waste was accepted from outside sources for incineration in the ACS incinerator. Resultant ash was disposed of on ACS property.

In 1972, the Indiana State Board of Health (ISBH) responded to residents' complaints and inspected the ACS facility. From April 1972 to September 1973, ISBH tried to get ACS to improve their waste handling, spill prevention measures and site maintenance. In 1974 and 1975, ISBH responded to reports that ACS was discharging chemicals to the sanitary sewer and dumping chemicals on site.

In 1980, the State of Indiana requested U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) involvement at the site. EPA inspections and sampling showed contamination from organic compounds in soil and ground water.

In 1984, the site was placed on EPA's National Priorities List (NPL), a roster of the nation's most serious hazardous waste sites. This listing made the site eligible for investigation and clean-up funds under the nation's Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), also known as Superfund.

The first part of the Superfund process, the Remedial Investigation (RI), is currently underway.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION and RECOVERY ACT (RCRA) - CURRENT OPERATIONS

Actions taken at ACS are regulated under two federal laws: RCRA and CERCLA. The RCRA action to enforce RCRA liability requirements is unrelated to EPA's CERCLA (Superfund) activities.

ACS has operated as a business regulated under RCRA, the federal law that regulates operations that treat, store or dispose of hazardous substances. ACS applied for an operating permit on November 18, 1980, subject to requirements spelled out in RCRA, and was granted interim status. (Interim status, when granted, allows a company to operate until EPA makes a decision regarding the permit application.)

On August 4, 1989, a Complaint was filed by EPA against ACS to enforce a section of RCRA dealing with financial liability. (Reference: Section 3008(a)(1) of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), as amended, 42 U.S.C. Section 6928(a)(1), and the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Consolidated Rules of Practice Governing the Administrative Assessment of Civil Penalties and the Revocation or Suspension of Permits, 40 CFR Part 22.) On May 2, 1990, a Consent Agreement and Final Order was entered at EPA in which ACS was given until September 5, 1990 to obtain liability insurance as spelled out in the order. The order stated that if ACS is unable to obtain such insurance, they must immediately "cease receipt of all hazardous waste," and, within 30 days of September 5, 1990, submit to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and EPA a closure plan including a closure schedule, "which addresse[s] all of its hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal units."

(NOTE: Current law allows ACS to request a variance from liability insurance requirements. ACS petitioned the State of Indiana for a variance. The Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) stated its intent to deny the variance request on June 29, 1990. A 45-day public comment period began on that day. A final decision on the variance request is still pending.)

FUTURE SUPERFUND ACTIVITIES

Phase I of the RI was completed in early December 1989, with the submittal of technical memoranda to EPA by ACS. Phase I results show contamination in the waste and burial areas, contaminated ground water under most areas of the site, and hazardous waste materials on-site. Phase II of the RI is completed. Phase II concentrated on determining the extent of ground-water contamination, sampling residential wells, determining the volume of hazardous substances in the waste burial areas, outlining wetlands on site, determining sediment and surface water contamination and the extent of buried waste.

Preliminary investigations show that on-site ground water is contaminated with benzene, xylene, toluene, methylene chloride and various semi-volatile compounds. Off-site residential wells are not contaminated.

The RI report is due October 1990. After the final report is complete and accepted by EPA, results will be made public. The second part of the RI/FS process, the Feasibility Study, will concentrate on addressing appropriate methods of site clean-up.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To obtain more information, please contact:

Regarding Superfund:

Karen Martin
Community Relations Coordinator
(312) 886-6128

Bob Swale
Remedial Project Manager
(312) 886-5116

Regarding RCRA:

Suzanne Kircos
Public Affairs Specialist
(312) 353-3209

Dan Bakk
RCRA Enforcement Specialist
(312) 886-3781

EPA Toll-free: (800) 621-8431 (9 - 4:30 CST)

A public information repository has been established so the public may review documents regarding the ACS Superfund site. Location:

Griffith Town Hall
111 N. Broad St.
Griffith, IN

A copy of the Consent Agreement and Final Order for the RCRA action outlined above has also been placed in the ACS repository.

MAILING LIST

If you did not receive this fact sheet in the mail, you are not on EPA's mailing list for the **American Chemical Services** Superfund site. To place your name on the mailing list, or to make a change or correction, please fill out this form, and send to:

Karen Martin, 5PA-14
Community Relations Coordinator
U.S. EPA
230 S. Dearborn St.
Chicago, IL 60604

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ AFFILIATION _____